

**Costa left out as Morata on target again in Atletico victory**



Atletico Madrid's Alvaro Morata (L) vies with Athletic Bilbao's Unai Nunez

AFP | Madrid

Diego Simeone's decision to leave out Diego Costa was vindicated on Saturday as Atletico Madrid beat Athletic Bilbao and Costa's replacement Alvaro Morata scored in the 2-0 victory.

Morata had been the one to sit on the bench against Bayer Leverkusen on Tuesday but his winning goal as a substitute earned him a start against Bilbao and the Spaniard delivered again.

"The changes were good for the team," said Simeone. "It was a great performance."

Morata's finish in the second half at the Wanda Metropolitano, after Saul Niguez had opened the scoring, secured Atletico a comfortable win that puts them above Real Madrid in the La Liga table and level on points with Barcelona.

The postponement of the Clasico due to unrest in Catalonia gave Simeone's side the chance to close the gap on the top two and sustain momentum from their gritty win in the Champions League.

# Bahrain wrap up remarkable campaign in Military Games

Bahrain's three gold medals yesterday helped bring their overall medal tally to 17

● **Bahrain finished an impressive eighth overall on the medal standings**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain won three gold medals yesterday as they wrapped up their spectacular campaign in the seventh CISM Military World Games in Wuhan, China.

The men's military football team outplayed their counterparts from Qatar to win their tournament final 3-1, while Bahraini athletes Shumi Leche and Eunice Chumba clinched first place in the men's and women's marathons, respectively.

Thiago Fernandes scored a brace to help spearhead Bahrain in their victory against the Qataris on the football pitch. He found the net in the 73rd minute with his team's second goal, and then once again in the fourth minute of stoppage time to put the nail in the coffin.

"It's my job as the number nine to score," Fernandes was quoted as saying. "I feel very happy and proud to help my team."

Just moments before Fernandes's first, the Bahrainis were gifted an own goal by Qatar's Naif Mubarak Alburaiqi. The Qataris then managed to get one back in the 81st minute



Fernandes (no. 9) celebrates after scoring with teammate Faraj (no. 22)

through Meshaal Abdulla Al Qebaisi to cut their deficit to 1-2, but Bahrain were able to close the match strong and secure the gold medal.

Bahrain's military football team was coached by Ahmed Alamrei, who had a starting 11 yesterday of Hamad Aldoseri in goal, along with Yahiya Infahi, Ebrahim Khojali, Qutubaldeen Hausa, Khalifa Yuse, Moses Jona, Abdulla Faraj, Habib Saeed, Marcus Pereira, Ali Kamel and Fernandes.

"I am so happy and proud of all of my players," said coach Alamrei. "I selected these players because they are fighters. Even if maybe sometimes they

have less technique or less of something else, they fight and they have spirit and this is very important."

Algeria joined Bahrain and Qatar on the football podium as bronze-medallists following a 4-0 win over North Korea in the match for third place.

In athletics, Leche raced to a fine victory amongst a field of 84 participants in the Men's Marathon. He claimed first place with a time of two hours eight minutes 28 seconds, well ahead of his closest challengers who were more than two minutes behind.

Alphonse Simbu of Tanzania was the silver-medallist in

2:11:16, while John Hakizimana of Rwanda claimed the bronze medal in 2:11:19.

Leche was the only Bahraini competing in the event.

Meanwhile, Chumba also enjoyed a clear win in the Women's Marathon. She completed the distance in 2:30:10 - 16 seconds ahead of runner-up Il Sim Park of North Korea. China's Dan Li finished in third place in 2:30:33.

"We are proud of our country," said Chumba. "We did a very good job with the training on us, the support of our fans, of our nation and of the federation officials."

A total of 43 athletes participated in the race.



**Bahrain clinched nine gold, one silver and seven bronze medals**

Bahrain's two marathon victories pushed them up to second place in the athletics medal table, equal on eight golds and 15 overall with powerhouses China who retained the top spot by virtue of winning five silvers to the Bahrainis' one.

Meanwhile, Bahrain's three gold medals yesterday helped bring their overall medal tally to 17, including nine gold, one silver and seven bronze medals. The Bahraini delegation finished an impressive eighth overall on the medal standings in the ranking by gold medals. They were also the top-ranked Arab country overall. Bahrain's medals came from Men's Football, Track and Field, and Judo.

The Military World Games is a multi-sport event for military sportspeople, organised by the International Military Sports Council (CISM). This year in Wuhan, more than 9,000 athletes took part, contesting 329 events in 27 sports.

## Federer claims record tenth Basel title

AFP | Basel

Roger Federer clinched a record-extending 10th Swiss Indoors championship title in his hometown of Basel with a crushing 6-2 6-2 victory over Australia's Alex de Minaur yesterday.

The 38-year-old Swiss has now won 103 singles titles in his career and the record win in Basel - where he once acted as a ball boy - was the second time he had won a tournament 10 times after achieving the feat in Halle in June.

Federer converted four of 10 break points and did not drop serve to wrap up the match in 68 minutes for his fourth title



Swiss Roger Federer returns a ball to Australian Alex De Minaur

of the year after wins in Dubai, Miami and Halle.

"It was fast but very nice, I think I played a great match," an emotional Federer said after lifting the trophy.

"I thought Alex played a great

tournament as well, and I think we both can be very happy. But what a moment for me to win my 10th here in my hometown of Basel."

Federer and De Minaur traded blows with long baseline

exchanges early in the match, including an absorbing 39-shot rally when Federer led 2-1, before the Swiss stepped up a gear to break his opponent twice and take the opening set.

Federer was ruthless on his serve and retained his momentum and intensity in the second set, moving into a 3-0 lead after winning five games in a row before De Minaur held.

"It was a tough opener... the first five games, we had some great rallies," Federer added. "I never looked back."

"I was great on the offence, made very few unforced errors and came up with the big shots and served well when I had to."

## Warner's birthday T20 ton as Australia slam Sri Lanka

AFP | Adelaide, Australia

David Warner emphatically bounced back to form with a first-ever Twenty20 century as Australia crushed Sri Lanka by 134 runs in their opening match of the three-game series in Adelaide yesterday.

Birthday boy Warner clubbed an unbeaten 100 as he powered Australia to a massive 233 for two, aided by century stands with skipper Aaron Finch and Glenn Maxwell.



David Warner plays a shot

Sri Lanka limped to 99 from nine from their 20 overs in a

meek response, with leg-spinner Adam Zampa capturing three for 14.

It was Australia's biggest-ever win in the format and Sri Lanka's heaviest T20 defeat.

Coming off a dismal Ashes campaign in England and low scores in the new domestic season, Warner plundered his ton off 56 balls with four sixes and 10 fours.

The left-handed opener scored just 95 runs in 10 innings

for Australia's Ashes retention, but once he got set yesterday he pounded the Sri Lankan bowlers with belligerence, and reached his hundred off the last ball of the innings.

The ton on his 33rd birthday was complemented by blistering half-centuries from Finch and Maxwell, as the Australians ripped into the Sri Lankan bowlers -- with Kasun Rajitha's 0-75 off four overs proving the most expensive figures in a T20 international.

## Verstappen stripped of pole, hands Hamilton sixth title boost



Valtteri Bottas emerges from the wreckage of his car

AFP | Mexico City

Max Verstappen was given a three-place grid penalty and stripped of pole position at the Mexican Grand Prix late Saturday after race stewards ruled he failed to slow for a yellow flag following a dramatic crash which saw Valtteri Bottas bury his Mercedes into a trackside barrier.

The Red Bull driver's penalty means that Charles Leclerc of Ferrari was promoted to pole position ahead of teammate Sebastian Vettel with world champion-elect Lewis Hamilton moved up to third from fourth.

The Dutchman, who will start on the second row alongside Hamilton, was also handed two penalty points on his licence after dismissing con-

cerns for the sport's regulations during a news conference.

Verstappen, the winner in Mexico in 2017 and 2018, was on provisional pole when Bottas crashed heavily in his Mercedes at the final corner of his last run in Q3.

He had no need to improve his lap time, as his rivals had failed to beat his first attempt, but sped on.

He told reporters that he saw Bottas's crashed car at the final corner and did not back off, thus setting a new record fastest lap as he improved.

Verstappen, the author of his own downfall, said: "I think we know what we are doing otherwise we wouldn't be driving an F1 car."

"It's qualifying and you go for it. If they want to delete the lap, then delete the lap...."